

Why They Don't Come To Church Any More ①

MARK 4:1-20

Intro. **A.** Jesus taught many things that are hard to accept and practice.

1. It costs nothing to hear.

2. It costs nothing to say.

3. The third thing is difficult, doing.

B. In the verses preceeding chapter four, Jesus informed us of a difficult truth.

1. There are some things more important than Mama or Daddy, or friends.

2. God, Jesus, and the truth make first claim on our love, our energy, our time.

C. In the verses we are going to study at this time, we will learn other difficult truths.

1. Some hear and respond to spiritual information and others don't.

2. Some hear and respond to it but for different reasons abandon its claims.

Matth. 7:13-14 **3.** Only a few truly and for a life time enter the "narrow way."

I. Jesus Taught Multitudes Of People.

A. He taught them by the sea side.

Vs. 1 **1.** They gathered in great crowds.

2. He entered into a boat.

3. He taught them from the boat.

B. He taught them in parables.

Vs. 2 **1.** "he taught them many things by parables."

2. In these parables are His teachings.

F. The warning of Jesus.

2.

Vs. 9 1. "He that ears to hear,..."

2. "let him hear".

3. If your ears hear the sound then let your brain grasp the meaning.

II. His Introduction To The Interpretation.

A. The Request of His disciples.

Vs. 10 1. "And when he was alone..."

2. "... they that were about him with the twelve" asked of him the parable."

3. We must accept what He says, not what we wish He had said or want it to teach.

B. Why did He speak in parables?

Vs. 11 1. The Apostles and other intimate and trusted students would understand and accept the truth of His Kingdom. The casual listener and the mildly curious would only be further confused.

2. "given" = δίδωμι = to give, to present, (with implied idea of giving freely unforced) therefore to yield, deliver, supply, commit.

3. "mystery" = μυστήριον = a secret, not necessarily difficult to comprehend but impossible to know until its meaning is confided.

4. "to those who are outside this group, without special instruction, who could not handle the truth, those who would stumble at it because of spiritual immaturity, because of them I speak in parables.

C. Those "outside" and the truth.

Vs. 12 1. "That seeing they may see, and not perceive".

B. The seed sown by the way side. 3.

Vs. 15. 1. The word, (the truth) is sown.

2. They hear the truth.

3. Satan comes immediately.

4. He takes away the word sown in their heart.

5. "taketh away" = ἀίρω = to lift up and carry away.

C. The seed sown on stony ground.

Vs. 16+17. 1. "... immediately receive it with gladness..."

2. "And have no root in themselves" The fault is in themselves. They have no character, no commitment and therefore they: "... endure but for a time..."
= ἀλλὰ = but + προσωκαίροι = for a season + εἰσὶν = are.

They are seasonal in service and attendance.

3. What is their problem? (1.) "... when

① affliction or persecution arises for the word's sake".

② θλίψις = "pressure" (because of the truth)".

③ διωγμός = "pursuit by one's enemies".

4. "... immediately they are offended".

= σκανδαλίζω = to lay a trap, to fall or stumble.

Instead of the truth becoming a stone to build with it becomes a rock to stumble over.

D. The seed sown among thorns.

Vs. 18+19. 1. "thorns" = ἀκανθα a point, a plant with sharp projections on its stems. A noxious weed.

2. "... such as hear the word".

3. What happens to these people? "And the cares of this world" = μέριμνα = dividing or distracting the mind, thoughts that divide one's focus, causing anxiety or fear.

4. "... the deceitfulness of riches..."

= ἀπάτη = deceit, esp. by false statements, here it is self deception.